

Letterhead

OJCS 157-75  
28 JAN 1975

Mr. Harry S. White, Jr.  
Associate Director for ADP Standards  
Institute for Computer Sciences and Technology  
National Bureau of Standards  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Washington, D.C. 20234

Dear Mr. White:

STATINTL

This is to advise you that [REDACTED]  
will represent this Agency on FIPS Task Group #17  
and will attend the meeting scheduled for 4 February  
1975 at the National Bureau of Standards in Gaithers-  
burg, Maryland. [REDACTED]

STATINTL

HARRY E. FITZWATER  
Director of Joint Computer Support

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Bureau of Standards** *C/USD.*  
Washington, D.C. 20234

Institute for Computer  
Sciences and Technology

1975 January 8

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Membership of FIPS Task Group 17  
FIPS Points of Contact  
Data Standards Points of Contact  
Membership of FIPSCAC

From: Harry S. White, Jr., Associate Director  
for ADP Standards

*Harry S. White, Jr.*

Subject: First Meeting of FIPS Task Group 17, Data Element Directories

The first meeting of FIPS Task Group 17, Data Element Directories, will be held on 1975 February 4, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Green Auditorium, Administration Building, National Bureau of Standards, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Our earlier memorandum of 1974 November 21 provided you with information on the purpose and program of work of this new Task Group. The NBS Institute for Computer Sciences and Technology is sponsoring this inter-agency committee in an effort to identify and develop standards and guidelines that will assist information managers within the Federal government to better manage their data resources. This effort will deal primarily with information represented on forms or in computer data bases. The results of this effort are not to establish a government-wide directory of data or to construct any specific directory, but should provide the tools whereby Federal departments and agencies can construct such directories to facilitate improved data management within their agencies.

Many of you are receiving this meeting invitation because you have already indicated your interest in participating in this effort. This initial meeting will be of a general nature with subsequent meetings devoted to the technical aspects of the development effort. We again urge all of you to attend this first meeting or to send a participant from your agency. If you have any questions concerning this work, please contact the Office of ADP Standards Management, telephone (301) 921-3157. A copy of the Program of Work for this Task Group is enclosed for your information.

Enclosure



FIPS TASK GROUP 17

DATA ELEMENT DIRECTORIES

PROGRAM OF WORK

Introduction

As the use of ADP increases within the Federal Government, this is accompanied by an increase in the investments in the data bases involved. It has been recognized that there are three major aspects of data systems which must be given equal management attention in order to achieve the expected efficiencies and economies from the use of computer technology. Namely, these are the hardware, software and data. In order to effectively manage data resources, it is first essential to be able to identify and describe these resources. This is done by identifying and describing the basic units of information (data elements) that are contained in the data bases. This identification, definition and description of the data elements is called a data element directory (DED). Already, some departments and agencies have begun to establish such directories and have utilized automated techniques to build and manipulate these directories. The work of FIPS Task Group 17 is to develop standards or guidelines for constructing data element directories and to identify performance standards for the automated processes for maintaining and utilizing them.

Accordingly, the following work program is provided for the efforts of FIPS Task Group 17, Data Element Directory.

Program of Work

1. Specify the objectives and requirements of a data element directory.
2. Survey and evaluate existing data element directories and processes which have already been implemented in government and industry to determine if any of these meet the specified objectives and requirements.
3. Develop standards or guidelines for constructing and maintaining a data element directory.
4. Develop performance standards for automating the data element directory.

Note: The objective of this work is to develop standards or guidelines that can be used by Federal departments and agencies in managing their data resources. The results of this work will not establish a government-wide directory of data nor will it result in the construction of any specific directory. The work is intended to provide the tools whereby Federal departments and agencies can construct such directories to better manage their data resources. With the increased emphasis being given to the problems of data security and the valid use of data, the employment of data element directories becomes even more important.

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